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## News Release

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### **USU Celebrates New Center to Educate Behavioral Health Specialist in Deployment Psychology**

**BETHESDA, Md** – The Center for Deployment Psychology (CDP) at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) will celebrate its opening with a lunch reception on Thursday, May 17 at 12:45 p.m.

“The establishment of the CDP is both timely and responsive to the recommendations of the Mental Health Task Force chaired by Vice Admiral Donald Arthur (35th Navy Surgeon General),” said S. Ward Casscells, M.D., assistant secretary of defense, Health Affairs. “This is an important tool in our approach to dealing with the mental health aspects of deployment for our troops and their families. We appreciate the efforts of the American Psychological Association (APA) and especially Congressman Bill Young (R., Fla.) in their foresight in envisioning and ensuring the establishment of this new Center.”

The CDP was established at the university with training sites across the country at ten Department of Defense/APA accredited clinical psychology internship sites. The center is part of USU’s mission to educate and train military and civilian health care professionals to “care for those in harm’s way.” This tri-service center is an innovative Department of Defense consortium specifically charged with increasing the expertise and number of military and civilian behavioral health care providers to provide high quality deployment-related services to military personnel and their families. During a time of increasing mental health needs associated with, or exacerbated by, deployment it is vital to develop a well trained cadre of psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers to treat members of the military community.

The CDP has a multi-faceted mission. It is designing and conducting behavioral health courses, developing training materials and increasing the awareness of the deployment-related behavioral health needs of service members and their families. In the future the CDP will take an active role in guiding deployment-related policy and program development, operations, and management through training and research efforts. In the last three months alone, the CDP has trained more than 100 mental health professionals across the country in various military health facilities to work with service members and their families. Current training topics include treatments for post traumatic stress disorder, caring for the seriously medically injured personnel, and family issues related to deployment. The center is developing additional training modules to assist military mental health care providers working in deployed situations and addressing some of the unique concerns of reservists and the National Guard.

USU educates health care professionals dedicated to career service in the Department of Defense and the United States Public Health Service (USPHS). The university provides military and public health-relevant education, research, service and consultation to the nation and the world, pursuing excellence and innovation during times of peace and war. Many of its graduates are supporting operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere, offering their leadership and expertise. Approximately one-fourth of all active-duty military medical officers are USU graduates.

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Because of the university's militarily unique mission, its curriculum as well as its research and service focus on the needs of our military and their families. An additional program at USU, the Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress (CSTS), is leading national efforts in mental health, diagnosis, treatment and suicide prevention with a particular focus on deployment health, prevention, and services to our military personnel and their families. CDP, CSTS and other USU military medical education and research programs will continue to collaborate and extend the knowledge base and treatment capacity of the military health system.

USU values the fundamental role of disease and injury prevention and health promotion in optimizing military readiness in its mantra "prevention as the first line of defense."

For more information, call the Office of External Affairs at (301) 295-1219.

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